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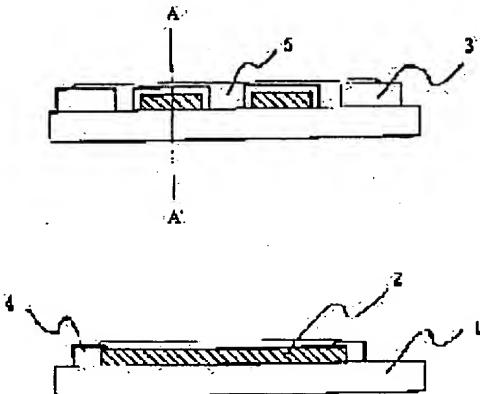
(22)Date of filing : 18.06.1997 (72)Inventor : INOKOSHI YOSHIO

(54) ACTIVE ELEMENT TYPE MAGNETIC READING HEAD

(57)Abstract:

PROBLEM TO BE SOLVED: To achieve a high density storing of an external storage device by driving from an external high frequency circuit an element which electrically converts a signal from a recording medium due to a magnetic field and generating an impedance change with the magnetic field.

SOLUTION: This active element type magnetic reading head has such a structure as a conductive body 2 of an amorphous alloy film consisting of, for example, four elemental alloy CoFeSiB₄ is formed on a glass or silicon substrate and is in contact with an electrode part 4 for driving the conductor 2 and making a current to flow therethrough. A magnetism separation film 3 is positioned outside of the amorphous thin film conductor 2, and is composed of a soft magnetic material represented by CoNbZr or FeNi. Moreover, a protection film 5 is formed according to the situation. When a high frequency current is supplied to an amorphous alloy (desirably, an alloy with a small positive magneto-strictive constant) containing 3d-ferromagnetic transition metals with a large $d\mu/dH$, an electric resistance with a very large magnetic field dependence is achieved.



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CLAIMS

[Claim(s)]

[Claim 1] a magnetic-recording medium, the motor made to support and rotate a magnetic-recording medium, and the magnetic field from a record medium -- electromagnetism -- by changing In the computer external storage which consists of circuits which process the reading signal after being changed the magnetic head which can read the information saved to the magnetic-recording medium, and electromagnetism -- The active element mold MAG reading head characterized by the component which changes electrically the signal by the magnetic field from a record medium producing the impedance change by the magnetic field by driving from an external RF circuit.

[Claim 2] the aforementioned electromagnetism -- a sensing element including the ferromagnetic element which consists of one kind of the iron of more than 60 atom % and under 90 atom %, or cobalt, or two kinds on a substrate with the soft magnetism amorphous alloy thin film the magnetostriction constant of whose is 10-7 to 10-5 The active element mold MAG reading head according to claim 1 characterized by consisting of layers with the electrode for driving the soft magnetism amorphous alloy thin film concerned, and the insulation for covering magnetically and electrically at least.

[Claim 3] the aforementioned electromagnetism -- the drive approach of the active element mold MAG reading head according to claim 1 characterized by obtaining the impedance change by the magnetic field by superimposing the direct-current bias in which drive frequency has the amplitude 0.3 to 0.7 times the amplitude of drive high frequency, using the high frequency current 100kHz or more in a sensing element.

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DETAILED DESCRIPTION

[Detailed Description of the Invention]

[0001]

[Field of the Invention] This invention relates especially to the reading section of the magnetic head about the magnetic head of the external storage of a computer.

[0002]

[Description of the Prior Art] In recent years, a raise in the recording density of the external storage (especially hard disk drive) of a computer is very remarkable. In connection with it, the request to high-sensitivity-izing of the magnetic head, especially a reading head is very strong. A hard disk rotates with a spindle motor and it is a usual state that the structural design is made so that the magnetic head (slider section) can hold the predetermined height on a record-medium side (premature start height) by the dynamic balance with the buoyancy by the air gap formed between it and a record-medium side top and the spring pressure of the gimbal section.

[0003] The reading head called the conventional M I G (Metal In Gap) method uses the induction electromotive voltage generated at the both ends of the coil interlinked with it as a reading signal of a head, when the magnetic flux produced from a magnetic-recording medium side using what interlinked the coil in an annular soft magnetic material with an opening pierces through an annular soft magnetic material through an opening. Here, the magnetic field strength formed by the residual magnetization in a magnetic-recording medium and the position on a magnetic-recording medium side has become clear beforehand, and reading can do the condition of the residual magnetization in a magnetic-recording medium (sense and spacing of residual magnetization), i.e., the stored recording information, by measuring the wave (a polarity and peak location) of this induction electromotive voltage.

[0004] However, it is difficult for gap loss to occur for the existence of the opening of the reading head section, and to realize a high S/N ratio in addition to the separation loss by existence of premature start height, by the M I G method. Moreover, it is difficult to write in also geometrically, to read with a head, and for a means to only have sharing a head at present, and to raise the frequency of both of R/W to coincidence.

[0005] then, the alloy thin film which is recently called MR (magnetic reluctance) component and which is represented by the iron nickel alloy -- reading -- the electromagnetism of a head -- the head used as a sensing element is becoming in use. If this impresses an external magnetic field to an iron nickel alloy thin film, it is based on the physical phenomenon in which the electric resistance in a magnetic film increases. However, at the head using MR (magnetic reluctance) component, sensibility (magnetic-reluctance rate of change per unit magnetic field strength) is about 0.1% / Gauss. It is low in comparison, and it is not enough if the demand of a raise in recording density which will increase increasingly will be considered from now on.

[0006] then, the electromagnetism which raised sensibility more -- the present condition is that research and development of the multilayers which consist of two or more magnetic layers called a GMR (huge magnetic reluctance) component aiming at implementation in a sensing element are furthered briskly.

[0007]

[Problem(s) to be Solved by the Invention] If it recollects now that recording density is defined as a product of the track recording density per track, and the track density per unit segment of the direction of a path, it means leading to the improvement in track recording density raising recording density. Generally it is known that it is effective to make small the moment product (namely, product of the residual magnetic flux density of the record layer in a magnetic-recording medium and the thickness of a magnetic layer) of a magnetic-recording medium as for raising track recording density, and the fall of the moment product of a magnetic-recording medium is being enhanced with improvement in the fact and recording density every year. However, the fall of a moment product suggests the fall of the reinforcement of the magnetic field formed on a magnetic-recording medium. the distance (premature start height) which exists between the base of a head, and a magnetic-recording medium top if a head tends to read a smaller magnetic field signal -- more -- small -- carrying out (reduction-izing of separation loss) -- or it is thought that the means of whether the electromotive force per improvement in the sensibility of a head, i.e., the unit magnetic field of a head, or its resistance change is increased and ***** is effective. However, if the surface roughness of a several nm - dozens of nm magnetic-recording medium existing and existence of the fluctuation in the direction component of a vertical of a head are usually considered and combined by the approach by the former here In the premature start height of 10-20nm or less The base of a head and the heights on a magnetic-recording medium collide repeatedly, big fluctuation occurs in the output signal of a head with the generating heat, and there is a limitation in contracting premature start height by that which causes the fall of the S/N ratio of a head remarkably (problem of thermal asperity).

[0008] On the other hand, if an eye is changed to improvement in the sensibility of a head, it is shifting to MR method from a M I G (Metal In Gap) method. By the I G (Metal In Gap) method, since generating of an induction electromotive voltage is used theoretically, it is easy to come out of output fluctuation of the head reflecting the rotation nonuniformity of a magnetic-recording medium. Furthermore, it is hard to take the structure arrangement which read with the write-in head and separated the head on the structure of a head, and practical use is presented as a common head in many cases. For this reason, when making L (inductance) of a coil increase in order to increase the sensibility of a reading head, the design of the head which writes in conversely, causes the fall of the threshold frequency at the time (Snake limit), and raises both frequency to coincidence was difficult.

[0009] The head of MR method uses the magnetic field dependency of the electric resistance of the thin film theoretically represented by the iron nickel alloy. Since frequency dependent [of an external magnetic field / as opposed to the electric resistance in MR film] is small, fluctuation of the output level of the head reflecting the rotation nonuniformity of a magnetic-recording medium is small good in comparison. And since it is possible to take the arrangement structure which wrote in, read with the head, and dissociated and became independent respectively about the head, the design which increased each frequency of writing and reading to coincidence is possible.

[0010] However, for the head of MR method, although it has the outstanding description mentioned above, if what high recording density-ization of a hard disk drive will continue from now on also is considered, the sensibility is about 0.1% / Gauss. It cannot be said that extent is enough. And it is common for generating of the Barkhausen noise which is one of the causes of head [poor] to also have inadequate removal of the inclusion in MR film and homogenization of MR film, and it is considered to be the actual condition that it is still excellently. Although the fall of the yield is one of the factors which link with the rise of product cost directly and check the spread of MR heads, it is not an overstatement.

[0011] Even if current, and research and development make it the GMR (huge magnetic reluctance) component advanced briskly Although about about 10 to 20 times [of an MR head] high sensibility is expected to be sure Considering that it is the description to consist of two or more very thin (about about 10-200nm of hits [Much more]) layers of an antiferromagnetism layer, a ferromagnetic layer, a non-magnetic layer, and a soft magnetism layer, as compared with it of an MR head, a more difficult thing can guess manufacture easily.

[0012] As for searching for the appearance of a reading head with a commercial scene cheap high moreover, sensibility does not wait for argument.

[0013]

[Means for Solving the Problem] If the high frequency current is generally energized to a conductor, a current flows in the surface section of a conductor according to the skin effect, and it is known that the resistance component R will increase. The ratios of t_c , d, and t_c can be indicated [the thickness of the epidermis] to be theta then several 1, and several 2 for the thickness of d' and a conductor.

[0014]

[Equation 1]

$$R = R_0 \left(1 + \frac{\theta}{2} \cdot \frac{\sinh \theta + \sin \theta}{2 \cosh \theta - \cos \theta} \right)$$

[0015]

[Equation 2]

$$\theta = t_c \cdot \sqrt{\frac{\omega \mu \sigma}{2}}$$

[0016] Here, let omega into angular frequency and let permeability and sigma be electrical conductivity for mu. The 2nd above-mentioned term of the 1st formula shows the increment of resistance by the skin effect, to omega, when theta is zero (direct current), $\omega = 0$ [i.e.,], in an increasing function, the 2nd term serves as zero, and the right-hand side of the 1st formula shows direct current resistance R_0 . furthermore, basic practices although eddy current loss must also be taken into consideration in a detail, since the same theta dependency as several 1 is shown -- it thinks on the basis of a-one number henceforth. Now, if several 1 both sides are differentiated by H (magnetic field strength), it can be written as several 3 by the differential rule of a composite function.

[0017]

[Equation 3]

$$\frac{dR}{dH} = R_0 \cdot g(\theta) \cdot \theta' \cdot \frac{d\mu}{dH}$$

[0018]

[Equation 4]

$$g(\theta) = \frac{d}{d\theta} \left\{ \frac{\theta}{2} \cdot \frac{\sinh \theta + \sin \theta}{2 \cosh \theta - \cos \theta} \right\}$$

[0019]

[Equation 5]

$$\theta' = \frac{t_c}{2\sqrt{2}} \cdot \sqrt{\frac{\omega \sigma}{\mu}}$$

[0020] Here, g (theta) and θ' are respectively set to several 4 and several 5. Now, the magnetization curve of a magnetic alloy is considered. Flux density (B) is taken along an axis of ordinate, and an external effective field (H) is taken along an axis of abscissa. For example, nickel and Fe And the magnetic saturation if the flux density (B) of those alloys usually rises gently in the increment in an external magnetic field when a magnetic field minute into the crystallinity alloy which consists of 3d ferromagnetism transition metals, such as Co, is impressed, and large amplitude excitation is carried out further, after going up to a linear mostly is reached, and it becomes a linear completely. Here, if it recollects that mu is an amount defined by the ratio of B (flux density) and an external effective magnetic field (H), and is an inclination on a magnetization curve, in the case of the above-mentioned crystalline alloy, change of the inclination, i.e., $d\mu/dH$, will become very small (if the inclination on mu, i.e., a magnetization curve, is fixed, $d\mu/dH$ serves as zero). In several 3, this means that it is difficult to raise remarkably dR/dH of left part (magnetic field dependency of an electric resistance component), i.e., sensibility, in the case of the above-mentioned crystalline alloy, even when g (theta) of

the right-hand side and the value of theta' are enlarged (for example, the very high frequency current which enlarges omega is passed). in fact, the electromagnetism of an MR head -- even if it passes the high frequency current on the permalloy film which consists of iron nickel used for a sensing element -- sensibility (dR/dH) -- at most about 1%/Oe It is extent.

[0021] On the contrary, g (theta) and theta' become the case (theta' is zero when it is a direct current of omega= 0) of being small, and the amorphous alloy which contains big 3d ferromagnetism transition metals of dmu/dH in a minute magnetic field excitation field does not show the magnetic field dependency of resistance from several 3, either. In fact, even if it passes the current of only a direct current to the amorphous 4 yuan alloy thin film which consists of Co, Fe, Si, and B, only the magnetic field dependency of the small electric resistance component of under about 0.5% / Oe is almost shown.

[0022] This invention is based on the fact that the magnetic field dependency of very big electric resistance is acquired, if the high frequency current is energized to the amorphous alloy (alloy with a desirable forward small magnetostriction constant) containing big 3d ferromagnetism transition metals of dmicro/dH. Here, the case of under 60 atom %, it is because permeability is small, in more than 90 atom %, an amorphous alloy cannot generate conversely content of one sort or two sorts of combination, iron or cobalt, easily, and, moreover, the reason which limited the presentation to the range according to claim 2 depends it on the magnetic field dependency of permeability being small. Moreover, in the case of an alloy with a forward big value, or the alloy of a conversely negative magnetostriction constant, the reason for having made the magnetostriction constant into the range according to claim 2 is because big sensibility may not be shown but a large hysteresis may occur. Moreover, it is because this invention is what mainly uses a skin effect and an eddy current so that clearly [the reason for having indicated the frequency of the current to drive to claim 3] from the above explanation, and the reason for having made the amplitude of a direct-current bias current into 0.3 to 0.7 times of the RF drive amplitude is because the biggest sensibility was obtained.

[0023] The GMR head which is one of the candidates of the conventional MR head or the future promising magnetic head has the admiration which has concentrated on thickness control with detailed nano meter order, and research and development of a minute alloy organization and a film presentation, but on the other hand that the yield serves as a bad cause of high cost cannot deny it. In this invention, the thickness control of nano meter order does not necessarily need the skin effect and the eddy current effectiveness by the high frequency current by being adapted for the thin film of the alloy presentation indicated by the claim, and electromagnetism -- by having used the sensing element as the amorphous alloy homogeneous in quality of the material, it is possible to suppress the bulk HAUZEN jump which is one of the big causes of head [poor], and a cheap magnetic reading head can be supplied by high sensitivity.

[0024]

[Embodiment of the Invention] M B E It is Fe-nickel with a thickness of about 10nm on a silicon substrate at the purpose which improves the S/N ratio of a reading head using equipment (Molecular Beam Epitaxy molecular beam epitaxy). The binary-system-alloy thin film was formed. **** is called the magnetic-separation film. Organic polymeric materials with a sensitization radical were applied by the thickness of 0.8 micrometers on the magnetic-separation film. After exposing, developing and rinsing this sample using an aligner, the predetermined protective coat for dry etching was formed on the magnetic-separation film by processing for 30 minutes at the temperature of 80-100 degrees C in oven. Processing of this soft magnetism film was performed by carrying out ion beam dry etching in an argon gas ambient atmosphere. Next, by dipping and carrying out a substrate into resist (organic giant-molecule material) removal liquid, the resist was removed and the soft magnetism film of a predetermined configuration was obtained.

[0025] electromagnetism -- a sensing-element thin film -- M B E Membranes were formed using equipment. The obtained film consisted of a presentation of 74(Co0.94Fe0.06) Si 15B11, and was made into the thickness of 10nm - 1 micrometer in a tentative way. Processing of the film is the same as that of the process mentioned above almost. Since a drive is energized in the membranous die-length direction, the excitation by the high frequency current starts in a current and the direction of a right

angle, and mainly serves as the membranous cross direction. Here, when magnetic field about 100kHz or more where a frequency is fully high was impressed, mu usually heat-treated in the about 200-300-degree C temperature requirement in the field so that the membranous cross direction might serve as [the way of the approach by the magnetization rolling mechanism] a hard axis from domain wall displacement, since it was high. The measuring device which makes an optical-lever method a principle performed the magnetostriction constant, and it obtained the forward very small magnetostriction constant of 10-6 order. Moreover, the value of measurement of Hk (anisotropy field) was about 0.5 Oe (s) - 10Oe extent using VSM (oscillating sample mold measurement machine).

[0026] electromagnetism -- after electrode production for energizing to a sensing-element thin film formed membranes using the sputtering system which used Cu as the target, it was processed by the approach of the usual semi-conductor process technique. Electrode material may be not Cu but aluminum here. Moreover, SiO₂ grade may be formed according to a situation as a protective coat. A drive and an analog circuit may apply the usual RF circuit. this example -- setting -- another excitation mold oscillator circuit (for example, multivibrator) -- separately -- constituting -- a book -- electromagnetism -- the sensing element was driven. Drive frequency could be 10MHz. Here, the polarity of an output and the further high increase in power were attained by superimposing direct-current bias with the amplitude of the abbreviation one half of the drive high frequency amplitude. moreover, a book -- electromagnetism -- an improvement of the linearity of output change of sensing-element both ends, and the thermal asperity mentioned above sake -- a book -- electromagnetism -- after preparing what constituted the sensing element on the 2-set substrate and taking the differential of 2 sets of those outputs, it carried out by amplifying.

[0027] What produced separately the head section of the conventional Winchester mold which consists of the soft magnetism film and insulating layers for a coil and magnetic-flux induction was used for the write-in head. In this example, after it wrote junction on a reading head in the side face of the aforementioned reading head substrate and it pasted up the head section, it performed micro processing and adjustment by Ar ion beam ETCHINGU so that premature start height might become equal about the location of the field of both heads.

[0028] the electromagnetism of the reading head by this invention -- the schematic diagram of the sensing-element section is shown in drawing 1. First, on glass or a silicon substrate 1, the conductor 2 of the amorphous alloy thin film which consists of CoFeSiB an alloy of 4 yuan was formed, and the polar zone 4 for driving and energizing a conductor 2 considered as the structure in contact with it. The magnetic-separation film 3 is located in the outside of the conductor 2 of an amorphous thin film, is the purpose which raises the S/N ratio of a magnetic reading head, and consists of soft magnetic materials represented by CoNbZr and FeNi. A protective coat 5 forms membranes according to a situation.

[0029] Drawing 2 shows the resistance rate of change per gauss of the amorphous dynamic body by the drive frequency when energizing and driving the compound drive current the high-frequency-current amplitude of 4mA and whose amplitude of direct-current bias are 2mA on the magnetic reading head shown in drawing 1 . In this invention, if the magnetic sensibility of about 8% / Gauss is shown and it considers and combines that they of the conventional MR head are about 0.1% / Gauss, the remarkable thing of the property improvement is clear.

[0030]

[Effect of the Invention] by this invention, it contributes to achievement of a raise in recording density in external storage (especially hard disk drive) greatly -- things can be carried out. And since severe thickness control does not necessarily need compared with the case of elegance conventionally, when the yield considers and combines excelling also that it is good and economically, the industrial meaning is very large.

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(71)出願人 395003198

株式会社エスアイアイ・アールディセンター
一

千葉県千葉市美浜区中瀬1丁目8番地

(72)発明者 猪越 良夫

千葉県千葉市美浜区中瀬1丁目8番地 株
式会社エスアイアイ・アールディセンター
内

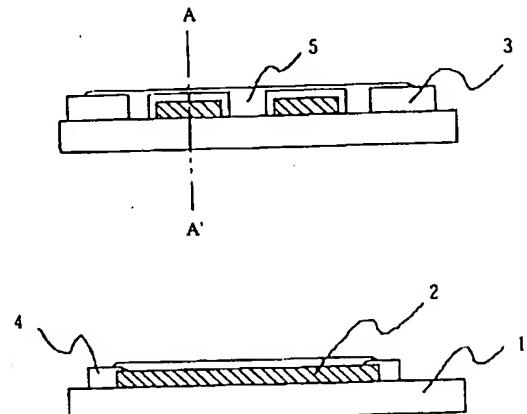
(74)代理人 弁理士 林 敏之助

(54)【発明の名称】能動素子型磁気読み取りヘッド

(57)【要約】

【課題】外部記憶装置(特にハードディスクドライブ)の高記録密度化の要求に対応するため、高性能読み取りヘッドを提供する。

【解決手段】基板上に60原子%以上かつ90原子%未満の鉄あるいはコバルトの1種類あるいは2種類からなる強磁性元素を含み、その磁歪定数が $10^{-7} \sim 10^{-5}$ である軟磁性アモルファス合金薄膜に、駆動周波数が100kHz以上の高周波を用い、かつ駆動高周波振幅の0.3~0.7倍の振幅を持つ直流バイアスを重畠することにより、磁場によるインピーダンス変化を生ずる能動型の電磁変換素子を磁気読み取りヘッドの電磁変換素子として搭載した。



A - A' 断面図

【特許請求の範囲】

【請求項1】 磁気記録媒体と、磁気記録媒体を支持し回転させるモータと、記録媒体からの磁場を電磁変換することにより、磁気記録媒体に保存された情報を読み込み可能な磁気ヘッドと、電磁変換された後の読み込み信号を処理する回路から構成されるコンピュータ外部記憶装置において、記録媒体からの磁場による信号を電気的に変換する素子が、外部高周波回路から駆動されることにより、磁場によるインピーダンス変化を得ることを特徴とする能動素子型磁気読み取りヘッド。

【請求項2】 前記の電磁変換素子は、基板上に60原子%以上かつ90原子%未満の鉄あるいはコバルトの1種類あるいは2種類からなる強磁性元素を含み、その磁歪定数が 10^{-7} から 10^{-6} である軟磁性アモルファン合金薄膜と、当該軟磁性アモルファス合金薄膜を駆動するための電極と、磁気的かつ電気的に遮蔽するための绝缘性をもつ層から少なくとも構成されることを特徴とする請求項1記載の能動素子型磁気読み取りヘッド。

【請求項3】 前記の電磁変換素子において、駆動周波数が100kHz以上の高周波電流を用い、かつより高周波振幅の0.3～0.7倍の振幅を持つ直流バイアスを重畠することにより、磁場によるインピーダンス変化を得ることを特徴とする請求項1記載の能動素子型磁気読み取りヘッドの駆動方法。

【発明の詳細な説明】

【0001】

【発明の属する技術分野】 本発明は、コンピュータの外部記憶装置の磁気ヘッドに関するものであり、特に磁気ヘッドの読み取り部に関するものである。

【0002】

【従来の技術】 近年、コンピュータの外部記憶装置（特にハードディスクドライブ）の高記憶密度化は、極めて顕著である。それに伴い磁気ヘッド、特に読み取りヘッドの高感度化への要望は極めて強い。ハードディスクはスピンドルモータによって回転され、磁気ヘッド（スライダ部）は、それと記録媒体面上との間で形成されるエアーギャップによる浮力とジンバル部のバネとの力学的な釣り合いにより、記録媒体面上の所定の高さ（フライングハイド）を保持できるよう機構的な設計がなされているのが常である。

【0003】 従来のMIG（Metal In Gap）方式と呼ばれる読み取りヘッドは、空隙を有した環状磁性体にコイルを巻き、磁気記録媒体から生じる磁束が空隙を介し環状磁性体を貫くことにより、それと巻き交するコイルの両端部で発生する誘導電圧をヘッドの読み取り信号として利用している。ここで、磁気記録媒体中の残留磁化と磁気記録媒体面上の所定の位置で形成される磁場の強さは予め判明しており、この誘導電圧の波形（極性やピーク位置）を測定することにより、磁気記録媒体中の残留磁化の状態（向き、残留磁化

の間隔）、即ち、蓄えられた記録情報を読み取ができる。

【0004】 しかしながら、MIG方式では、フライングハイドの存在による分離損失に加え、読み取りヘッド部の空隙の存在のためギャップ損失が発生し、高いS/N比を実現することは困難である。また幾何学的に書き込みヘッドと読み取りヘッドを共用するしか現時点では手段がなく、書き込みの両者の周波数を同時に高めるることは困難である。

【0005】 そこで最近では、MR（磁気抵抗）素子と呼ばれる、鉄ニッケル合金に代表される合金薄膜を読み取りヘッドの電磁変換素子として用いたヘッドが主流になりつつある。これは鉄ニッケル合金薄膜に外部磁場を印加すると、磁性膜内の電気抵抗が増加する、との物理的な現象に立脚したものである。しかしながら、MR（磁気抵抗）素子を用いたヘッドでは感度（単位磁場の強さあたりの磁気抵抗変化率）が約0.1%/Gaussと比較的に低く、今後、益々増加するであろう高記録密度化の要求を考えると十分ではない。

【0006】 そこでより感度を高めた電磁変換素子を実現を目指し、GMR（巨大磁気抵抗）素子と呼ばれる複数の磁性層から成る多層膜の研究・開発が盛んに進められているのが現状である。

【0007】

【発明が解決しようとする問題点】 今、記録密度はトラック1本あたりの線記録密度と径方向の単位線分あたりのトラック密度の積として定義されることを想起すれば、線記録密度の向上は記録密度を高めることに繋がることを意味する。線記録密度を高めることは磁気記録媒体のモーメント積（即ち、磁気記録媒体中の記録層の残留磁束密度と磁性層の厚みとの積）を小さくすることが有効であることが一般に知られており、事実、記録密度の向上と共に磁気記録媒体のモーメント積は年々、低下の一途を辿っている。しかしながら、モーメント積の低下は、磁気記録媒体上に形成される磁場の強度の低下を示唆するものである。より小さい磁場信号をヘッドが読み取ろうとすれば、ヘッドの底面と磁気記録媒体上との間に存在する距離（フライングハイド）をより小さくする（分離損失の低減化）か、あるいはヘッドの感度の向上、即ちヘッドの単位磁場あたりの起電力あるいはその抵抗変化を増大させるか、のいずれかの手段が有効と思われる。しかしながら、ここで前者による方法では、通常、数nm～数十nmの磁気記録媒体の表面荒さが存在することとヘッドの鉛直方向成分における振動現象の存在を考え併せると、10～20nm以下のフライングハイドでは、ヘッドの底面と磁気記録媒体上の凸部が繰り返し衝突し、その発生熱によりヘッドの出力信号に大きな揺らぎが発生し、著しくヘッドのS/N比の低下を招く（サーマルアスペリティの問題）ので、フライングハイドを縮めるには限界がある。

【0008】一方、ヘッドの感度の向上に目を転じれば、MIG (Metal In Gap) 方式からMR方式へと移行しつつある。MIG (Metal In Gap) 方式では、原理的に誘導起電圧の発生を利用しているので、(1) 気記録媒体の回転ムラを反映したヘッドの出力変動がやすい。

更にヘッドの構造上、書き込みヘッドと読み取りヘッドとを分離した構造配置を取り難く、共通ヘッドとして実用に供する場合が多い。このため読み取りヘッドの感度を増加する目的でコイルのL (インダクタンス) を増加させれば、逆に書き込み時の限界周波数の低下を招き（スネークリミット）、両者の周波数を同時に高めるヘッドの設計は困難であった。

【0009】MR方式のヘッドは、原理的に鉄ニッケル合金に代表される薄膜の電気抵抗の磁場依存性を利用するものである。MR膜はその電気抵抗に対する外部磁場の周波数依存性が小さいことから、磁気記録媒体の回転ムラを反映したヘッドの出力レベルの変動は比較的に入り易く良好である。しかも書き込みヘッドと読み取りヘッドを各々分離・独立した配置構造をとることが可能なことから、書き込みと読み取りの各周波数を同時に最大化した設計が可能である。

【0010】しかしながら、MR方式のヘッドは上述した優れた特徴を持つものの、今後もハードディスクドライブの高記録密度化が続くであろうことを考えると、その感度が約0.1%/Gauss程度では十分とは言えない。しかもヘッド不良の原因の一つであるバルクハウゼンノイズの発生も、MR膜中の介在物の除去ならびに界面の均質化が不十分であることが多く、依然高水準にあるのが実情と思われる。歩留りの低下は製品コストの上昇に直結し、MRヘッドの普及を阻害する要因の一つであると言つても過言ではない。

【0011】現在、研究・開発が盛んに進められているGMR (巨大磁気抵抗) 素子にしても、確かにMRヘッドの約10~20倍程度の高い感度は期待されているものの、反強磁性層、強磁性層、非磁性層および軟磁性層極めて薄い（一層あたり約10~200nm程度）複数の層から構成されることが特徴であることを考えると、製造MRヘッドのそれと比較してより困難であることが容易に推察できる。

【0012】市場は感度が高くしかも安価な読み取りヘッドの出現を求めていることは論を待たない。

【0013】

【課題を解決するための手段】一般的に導体に高周波電流を通電すると、表皮効果により電流は導体の表面部に流れ、抵抗成分Rが増大することが知られている。その表皮の厚みをd、導体の厚みをtc、dとtcとの比をθとすれば、数1、数2と示すことができる。

【0014】

【数1】

$$R = R_0 \left(1 + \frac{\theta}{2} \cdot \frac{\sinh \theta + \sin \theta}{2 \cosh \theta - \cos \theta} \right)$$

【数2】

$$\theta = tc \cdot \sqrt{\frac{\omega \mu \sigma}{2}}$$

【0016】ここで、 ω を角周波数、 μ を透磁率そして σ を電気伝導度とする。上記の第1式の第2項は表皮効果による抵抗の增加分を示し、 ω に対し単調増加関数で θ がゼロ、即ち $\omega=0$ (直流) の場合は第2項はゼロとなり、第1式の右辺は直流抵抗 R_0 を示す。更に詳細には渦電流損失も考慮しなければならないが、数1と同様のθ依存性を示すことから、本行以降数1を基本に考える。今、数1の両辺をH (磁場の強さ) で微分すると、合成関数の微分則により、数3と書くことができる。

【0017】

【数3】

$$\frac{dR}{dH} = R_0 \cdot g(\theta) \cdot \theta' \cdot \frac{d\mu}{dH}$$

【数4】

$$g(\theta) = \frac{d}{d\theta} \left(\frac{\theta}{2} \cdot \frac{\sinh \theta + \sin \theta}{2 \cosh \theta - \cos \theta} \right)$$

【数5】

$$\theta' = \frac{tc}{2\sqrt{2}} \cdot \sqrt{\frac{\omega \sigma}{\mu}}$$

【0020】ここで、 $g(\theta)$ および θ' は各々、数4、数5とする。今、磁性合金の磁化曲線を考える。縦軸に磁束密度(B)、横軸に外部有効磁界(H)を取る。例えばNi、Fe およびUCo等の3d強磁性遷移金属から構成される結晶性合金に微小な磁場を印加した場合、通常、これらの合金の磁束密度(B)は外部磁界の増加と共に緩やかに上昇し、更に大振幅励磁するとほぼリニアに上昇した後、磁気飽和に達し完全にリニアとなる。ここで、 μ はB (磁束密度) と外部有効磁場 (H)との比で定義される量であり、磁化曲線上の傾きであることを想起すれば、その傾きの変化、即ち、 $d\mu/dH$ は上記の結晶性合金の場合には極めて小さくなる (μ 、即ち磁化曲線上の傾きが一定なら $d\mu/dH$ はゼロとなる)。このことは数3において、右辺の $g(\theta)$ や θ' の値を大きくした (例えば ω を大きくする、極めて高い周波数電流を流す) 場合でも、上記の結晶性合金の場合には左辺の dR/dH (電気抵抗成分の磁場依存性)、即ち感度を著しく高めることは難しいことを意味する。事実、MRヘッドの電磁変換素子に使われる鉄ニッケルからなるバーマロイ膜に、高周波電流を流しても感度 (dR/dH) は高々、約1%/Oe程度である。

【0021】逆に、微小磁場励磁領域において $d\mu/dH$ の大きな3d強磁性遷移金属を含むアモルファス合金でも、 $g(0)$ や $0'$ が小さい場合（例えば、 $\omega=0$ の直流の場合は $0'$ がゼロ）となり、数3より抵抗の磁場依存性は示さない。事実、Co, Fe, SiおよびBから成るアモルファス4元合金薄膜に直流のみの電流を流しても、ほとんど約0.5%/ $0e$ 未満の小さな電気抵抗成分の磁場依存性しか示さない。

【0022】本発明は、 $d\mu/dH$ の大きな3d強磁性遷移金属を含むアモルファス合金（望ましくは正の磁歪定数の小さい合金）に、高周波電流を通電すると、大きな電気抵抗の磁場依存性が得られる事実に基づいている。ここで、請求項2に記載の範囲に組成を限定した理由は、鉄あるいはコバルトの1種あるいは2種・組み合せの含有率を60原子%未満の場合、透磁率が小さいためであり、逆に90原子%以上の場合、アモルファス合金が生成し難く、しかも透磁率の磁場依存性が小さいことによる。また磁歪定数を請求項2に記載の範囲とした理由は、正の大きな値を持つ合金や逆に負の磁歪定数の合金の場合、大きな感度を示さず、大きいヒステンシスが発生する場合があるためである。また駆動する電流の周波数を請求項3に記載した理由は、以上の説明から明らかであるように本発明は主に表皮効果および渦電流を利用してあるからであり、直流バイアス電流の振幅を高周波駆動振幅の0.3～0.7倍とした理由は、最も大きな感度が得られたためである。

【0023】従来のMRヘッドや今後の有望な「気ヘッド」の候補の一つであるGMRヘッドは、ナノメートルオーダーの微細な膜厚制御や精緻な合金組織および膜形成の研究・開発に注力してきた感があるが、その反面、歩留りが悪く高コストの一因となっていることは否めない。本発明では、高周波電流による表皮効果および渦電流効果を請求項に記載される合金組成の薄膜に適応することにより、必ずしもナノメートルオーダーの膜厚制御を必要としない。しかも、電磁変換素子を材質的に均質なアモルファス合金としたことで、ヘッド不良の大きな因の一つであるバルクハウゼンジャンプを抑えることが可能であり、高感度で安価な磁気読み取りヘッドを化することができる。

【0024】

【発明の実施の形態】M B E (Molecular Beam Epitaxy 分子線エピタキシー) 装置を用い、読み取りヘッドのS/N比を向上する目的で、シリコン基板上に約10nmの厚みのFe-Ni 2元合金薄膜を成膜した。本成膜装置は、磁気分離膜と称する。磁気分離膜上に感光基を有する有機高分子材料を0.8μmの厚みで塗布した。本試料をライナを用い露光、現像および水洗した後、オーブン80～100℃の温度で30分間処理することにより、磁気分離膜上に所定のドライエッティング用保護膜を形成した。保護膜の加工は、アルゴンガス雰囲気中でイオノームドラ

イエッティングすることにより行なった。次に基板をレジスト（有機高分子材）除去液中に浸すことにより、レジストを除去し所定の形状の軟磁性膜を得た。

【0025】電磁変換素子薄膜はMBE装置を用い成膜した。得られた膜は(Co0.94Fe0.06)74Si15B11の組成からなり、試験的には10nm～1μmの厚みとした。膜の加工は前述したプロセスとほぼ同様である。駆動は膜の長さ方向に通電するので、高周波電流による励磁は電流と直角方向にかかり、主に膜の幅方向となる。ここで、約100kHz以上の十分に周波数が高い磁場を印加した場合、通常、磁壁移動よりも磁化回転機構による方法のほうがは高いため、膜の幅方向が磁化困難軸となるように磁界中にて約200～300°Cの温度範囲にて熱処理を行った。磁歪定数は光てこ法を原理とする測定装置により行い、10⁻⁶オーダーの正の極めて小さい磁歪定数を得た。またHk（異方性磁界）の測定はVSM（振動試料型測定機）を用い、その値は約0.50e～100e程度であった。

【0026】電磁変換素子薄膜に通電するための電極作製は、Cuをターゲットとしたスパッタ装置を用いて成膜した後、通常の半導体プロセス技術の方法により加工した。ここで電極材はCuではなく、Alであっても良い。また、保護膜としてSiO₂等を状況に応じて成膜しても良い。駆動およびアナログ回路は通常の高周波回路を適用しても良い。本実施例においては、他励振型発振回路（例えばマルチバイブレータ）を別途構成し、本電磁変換素子を駆動した。駆動周波数は10MHzとした。ここで、駆動高周波振幅の約半分の振幅を持つ直流バイアスを重疊することにより、出力の極性ならびに更なる高出力化を図った。また、本電磁変換素子両端部の出力変化の線形性と前述したサーマルアスペリティの改善のため、本電磁変換素子を2組基板上に構成したものを準備し、それらの2組の出力の差動をとった後、増幅することにより行った。

【0027】書き込みヘッドは、コイルと磁束誘導のための軟磁性膜および絶縁層から構成される、従来のワインチャスター型のヘッド部を別途作製したものを用いた。読み取りヘッドとの接合は、本実施例では、前記の読み込みヘッド基板の側面に書き込みヘッド部を接着した後、両ヘッドの面の位置をフライングハイドが等しくなるようArイオンビームエッティングにより微細加工および調整を行った。

【0028】本発明による読み取りヘッドの電磁変換素子部の概略図を図1に示す。まず、ガラスあるいはシリコン基板1上に、例えばCoFeSiB 4元合金からなるアモルファス合金薄膜の導体2が形成され、導体2を駆動および通電するための電極部4がそれと接触した構造とした。磁気分離膜3はアモルファス薄膜の導体2の外側に位置し、磁気読み取りヘッドのS/N比を高める目的で、CoNbZrやFeNiに代表される軟磁性材料から構成されている。保護膜5は、状況に応じて成膜する。

【0029】図2は、図1に示した磁気読み込みヘッドに、高周波電流振幅4mA、直流バイアス電流幅が2mAの複合駆動電流を通電および駆動した時の駆動周波数によるアモルファス動体の1ガウスあたりの抵抗変化率を示している。本発明において、約8%/Gaussの磁気感度を示し、従来のMRヘッドのそれが約0.1%/Gaussであることを考え併せると、その特性改善は顕著であることが明らかである。

【0030】

【発明の効果】本発明により、外部記憶装置（特にハードディスクドライブ）における高記録密度化に達成に大きく貢献することできる。しかも従来品の±10%と比べ、厳しい膜厚制御が必ずしも必要としないことから、その

歩留りが良好であり経済的にも優れていることを考え併せると、その工業的な意義は極めて大きい。

【図面の簡単な説明】

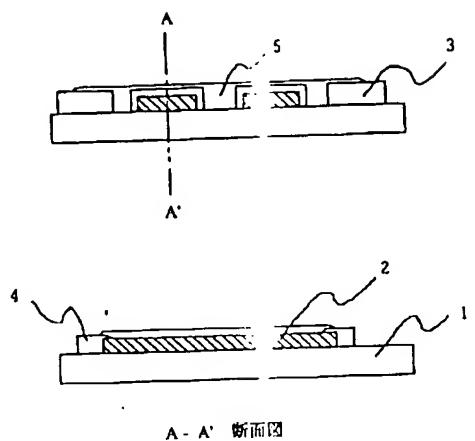
【図1】本発明の読み込みヘッドの電磁変換素子部の概略図。

【図2】本発明の読み込みヘッドの磁場感度特性。

【符号の説明】

- 1 シリコン基板
- 2 塔体
- 3 磁性分離膜
- 4 駆動
- 5 保護膜

【図1】



A - A' 断面図

【図2】

